

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 198182
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY LONDON

S E C R E T STATE 198182

FOR AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3

TAGS: MILI, PINS, UK, EI

SUBJECT: DAO TRAVEL TO NORTHERN IRELAND

1. THE DEPARTMENT CONTINUES TO BE CONCERNED BY RECURRING RUMORS AND ALLEGATIONS THAT U.S. MILITARY PERSONNEL ARE DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY SUPPORTING U.K. MILITARY ACTIVITIES IN NORTHERN IRELAND. ALTHOUGH DEVOID OF FOUNDATION, SUCH CHARGES GENERATE DISTRUST AND CONFUSION REGARDING U.S. GOVERNMENT EFFORTS TO DISCOURAGE VIOLENCE IN NORTHERN IRELAND.

2. WE RECOGNIZE THAT VISITS BY USDAO PERSONNEL TO BRITISH ARMY UNITS OPERATIONALLY ENGAGED IN NORTHERN
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IRELAND HAVE UTILITY WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF SERVICE-TO-SERVICE RELATIONS, AND CAN PROVIDE USEFUL ASSESSMENTS REGARDING TACTICS AND METHODS OF COMBATTING TERRORIST ACTIVITIES. HOWEVER, SUCH VISITS RUN A SIGNIFICANT CHANCE OF MISINTERPRETATION OR DELIBERATE DISTORTION WHICH COULD DAMAGE OUR EFFORTS TO PROMOTE PEACE IN THAT TROUBLED AREA. MOREOVER, THE HIGH VISIBILITY OF THE BRITISH

MILITARY PRESENCE IN NORTHERN IRELAND INCREASES THE RISK

OF OUR BEING FACED WITH A CONTRIVED INCIDENT DESIGNED TO
BUILD A CASE THAT THE U.S. MILITARY IS LENDING ACTIVE
SUPPORT TO BRITISH ARMY FORCES IN THE FIELD.

3. FOR THESE REASONS, ALL REQUESTS FOR PROPOSED VISITS
TO NORTHERN IRELAND BY U.S. MILITARY OFFICERS SHOULD
BE SUBMITTED TO THE AMBASSADOR FOR HIS APPROVAL. IF
THE AMBASSADOR DETERMINES THAT SUCH A VISIT IS IN THE
OVERALL NET INTEREST OF THE UNITED STATES, HE MAY
AUTHORIZE THE VISIT AND MAY ESTABLISH APPROPRIATE GROUND
RULES OR RESTRAINTS AS HE JUDGES NECESSARY TO MINIMIZE
THE RISK OF INCIDENT OR ADVERSE REACTION.

4. DIA CONCURS.

CHRISTOPHER

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NNN

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